

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested in light of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Status

Claims 1, 3-8, and 9-14 are currently pending in this application. Claims 2 and 10 have been canceled. Claims 1, 3, 7, 8, 10, and 14 have been amended. Claims 15-18 are added, support for these claims is found in Figures 1, 2, & 4. No new matter is added.

§103 Rejection

Original claims 1-14 are rejected as being unpatentable over Cho (USPN 6616841). Additionally, in support of this rejection, Kuzumoto (USPN 4623460), Huang (USPN 5284584), and Katou (USPN 6158721) are mentioned, but not cited against the claims. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Independent claims 1, 7, 8, and 14 have been amended to recite, *inter alia*, that the shell, first end cap, second end cap, center tube, first tube sheet, second tube sheet, and plug are "made from a same material." Applicant contends that Cho nor the references mentioned but not cited do not teach or suggest the invention as presently claimed. Applicant notes, last Office

Action, page 3, second paragraph, that contactors may be made of many materials but nowhere does it state that all the materials must be the same. Applicant contends that this feature is important because it lends itself to mass production of the module, and therefore, the lowering of the cost to produce the contactor. Additionally, this feature also imparts better physical integrity of the device against: a) temperature fluctuations, and b) solvent induced swelling of components.

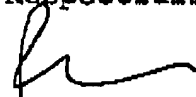
Cho, Kuzumoto, Huang, nor Katou teach or suggest that the shell, end caps, tube sheets, and center tube are made from the same material. Where is that suggestion? Answer, the instant application. Accordingly, this rejection must fail and must be removed.

Regarding new claims 15-18, the location of the shell opening at the midpoint between the ends of the shell creates a symmetry that allows highly efficient transverse flow on the shell side without high pressure drop, and allows flow in the device to be in either direction. This is not disclosed by Cho shows the shell opening at the end of the shell. Accordingly, this feature of the invention is not disclosed by Cho and these claims must be allowed.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests an early Notice of Allowance in this application.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert H. Hammer III
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 31,764

Customer No. 29494
Hammer & Hanf, P.C.
3125 Springbank Lane
Suite G
Charlotte, NC 28226
Telephone: 704-927-0400
Facsimile: 704-927-0485

H:\2000\100\Amend092006.doc